

PRESS RELEASE

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GRANTS AVAILABLE FOR CENTRAL FLORIDA TEACHERS, WITH NEW FUNDING

ORLANDO – AUGUST 28, 2017 – As Central Florida students buzz with excitement over the start of a new school year, teachers also have a number of reasons to be encouraged for the year ahead. United Arts is pleased to announce that despite state legislative cuts to funding from the Florida Division of Cultural Affairs to arts and cultural groups across the state, United Arts has received substantial funding from both the Harvey and Carol Massey Foundation and Wells Fargo. Their generous contributions to United Arts teacher grants has not only tripled the amount of funding available from \$12,000 to \$40,000 for this upcoming year but has also protected the teacher grant programming. Teachers grants are in such high demand that available funds are usually depleted within 48 hours of posting their availability so the increase in new dollars will be greatly appreciated by the teachers.

Massey Services Chairman and CEO Harvey Massey explained, “At Massey Services, we believe in being contributing members of our community, with a focus on arts and education. The United Arts’ Arts & Culture Access for School Kids program brings both of those together by allowing schoolchildren to experience arts and culture through a variety of workshops, hands on experiences, and special performances. We are extremely proud to support this program and provide students the opportunity to learn more about the arts in our community.”

“We understand the importance of United Arts of Central Florida’s efforts to enrich our local communities by investing in cultural and educational initiatives,” said **Wells Fargo Florida Community Affairs Manager and United Arts Board Chair Kate Wilson**. “Wells Fargo is proud to support the Arts & Culture Access for School Kids program, which enables children to attend performances and workshops focused on performing and visual arts, science, and history.”

Public schools in Lake, Orange, Osceola, and Seminole counties are eligible for the grant. The funding only covers the program cost, excluding transportation to field trip venues. A maximum of \$500 can be awarded to any one school. Eligible programs are listed on United Arts’ online directory of arts education programs for schools, UAArtsEd.com, including more than 75 program options from 25 providers in history, science, music, dance, theater and visual art. Standards-based lesson plans are provided to the teachers to provide easy connections to the students’ learning.

These programs are an important part of the school curriculum, especially for children whose families cannot afford to provide these experiences. “It is becoming increasingly rare for children to be exposed

to live arts performances like ballets, orchestra concerts, and plays,” said a teacher from Wolf Lake Elementary in Orange County last year. “It is really great for the students to have the opportunity through school where they wouldn’t have had it otherwise. I also believe that the experience makes what we do in the classroom real to the students. It helps solidify connections and reinforce teaching.”

Teachers can apply for the grant by searching the directory at UAArtsEd.com for a field trip, assembly performance, or workshop they would like to bring to their school. Then they must click “Book this Organization” to submit a request for booking, including potential dates. Using these requests as applications, United Arts will disburse awards in a lottery process starting the morning of September 15, until funds are depleted.

The programs average under \$5 per student, or \$100 per class; \$500 can provide a whole grade-level trip or a school assembly performance. Donors who would like to help support students in their county can go to UAArtsEd.com/page/donate.

United Arts also works with Orange County Public Schools, The School District of Osceola County and other funding partners to provide additional arts experiences for students. In total, over 140,000 student experiences were provided in the 2016-2017 school year across Lake, Orange, Osceola, and Seminole counties.

About United Arts of Central Florida

United Arts is a collaboration of individuals, businesses, governments and school districts, foundations, arts and cultural organizations, and artists. Its mission is to enrich communities by investing in arts, science and history. United Arts serves residents and visitors in Lake, Orange, Osceola and Seminole counties through more than 70 local arts, science and history organizations. It raises and distributes funds for these cultural groups and provides management, administrative and advisory services. Since 1989, United Arts has invested more than \$145 million in Central Florida’s arts and culture.

For more information, visit <http://www.UnitedArts.cc> or call 407.628.0333. Please email FloraMaria@UnitedArts.cc for comments or inquiries. You can follow United Arts of Central Florida on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

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